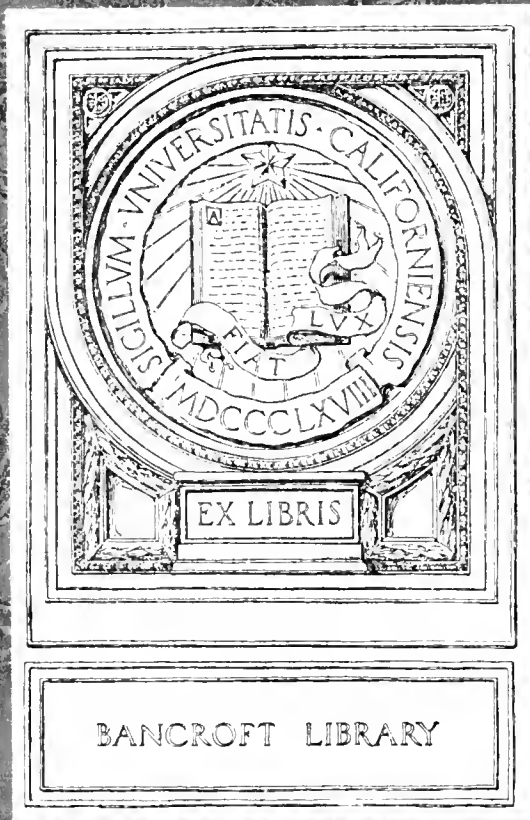


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THE ARIZONA GOLD FIELDS.

THEIR LOCATION AND RICHNESS.

The Capital of the New Territory—The Navajo War.

(Correspondence of the Evening Post.)

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO, November 23, 1863.

The officers of the new territory of Arizona reached here on the afternoon of the 14th instant, after a journey of fifty days from Leavenworth. They were accompanied by an escort of cavalry, and a heavy train, which rendered rapid travel impossible. They are in excellent health, and have stood the exposures of the trip remarkably well. All the way from Fort Larned they experienced unusually severe weather for the season, encountering two snow storms, and a temperature at Fort Lyon and elsewhere far below the freezing point. Indeed, the autumn thus far has been one of the coldest known on the plains for many years, and very trying to the traveller. Since the arrival of the party at this place they have been surrounded by snow, and have had to battle unusually high winds. Some of the roads leading from Santa Fe have been quite blocked up with snow. That to the valley of Taos was for some days impassable.

The erection of Arizona into a distinct territory has attracted especial attention to a district hitherto almost a *terra incognita*. With a view to facilitate the organization of the civil government, Brigadier-General James H. Carleton, commanding the department, has sent expeditions to different parts of the territory and established military posts at points where the Indians were disposed to be troublesome. Before the golden placers on the upper Gila, and its tributaries, the Agua Fria, San Francisco and Salinos, were discovered, he had perfected a plan for the exploration of that whole country, having no doubt of its auriferous wealth. Few military officers on the frontier have shown such a praiseworthy determination as has General Carleton, for twenty years past, to promote the development and settlement of the domain under his control. His good name must ever be honorably associated with the territories of New Mexico and Arizona and the entire Pacific region.

THE NEW GOLD FIELDS.

The most thorough and accurate report of the new and surpassingly rich gold fields of Arizona is given in the letter of Surveyor-General Clarke, of this territory, to General Carleton, at whose instance he went from here in July last to examine into and report upon the discoveries, their extent and probable yield. He reached the diggings on the 19th of August, and spent some weeks in visiting and carefully observing the various mining locations. They are mainly upon the western branches of Agua Fria, which has its rise some fifty miles southwesterly from the San Francisco Mountain (which may be considered the geographical centre of the territory), and runs into the Gila river on a line parallel with the Rio San Francisco, and about fifty miles west of that stream. Most of the miners at work on the General's arrival were Californians, who had entered the district from La Paz, on the Colorado river, a distance of some one hundred and fifty miles. A few Sonorians had come up by way of Tubac, Tucson and the Pima villages, from which latter point the diggings are about one hundred and fifty miles in a direction little west of north.

The mines thus far developed extend over a tract of country from twenty to thirty miles in width, and about one hundred and twenty-five in length. On nearly every claim worked to the bed rock gold is found in paying quantities. The most remarkable place, discovered by one Jack Swilling, a noted character from this territory, is on the summit of Antelope mountain, between the Antelope and Indian creeks. There is a depression between two rocky peaks, through which there is a quartz ledge cropping out. The solid rock on either side of this ledge is covered with a reddish earth a few inches in depth. Swilling had taken twenty thousand dollars worth of the precious ore from this place within a few weeks. The specimens shown General Clark were all coarse. In a parcel worth six hundred dollars he could not find a piece worth less than ten cents, and Swilling had one nugget weighing quite half a pound. Much of the mineral had been dug out with common Jack knives, and many of the miners were entirely engaged in dry washing, owing to a lack of water. This would appear to be the principal drawback with which the gold-seekers will have to contend. Scarcely one of the many creeks could be depended upon for a supply of water more than sufficient for drinking purposes. How it will be in the wet season remains to be seen.

It is the prevailing opinion among the miners, and with those here who are familiar with the configuration of the country east of the present diggings, that the gold deposits extend in that direction, and that the richest beds are yet to be discovered. The Indians are said to hold this view, but to show no desire to encourage investigation. Where the miners are now at work they are friendly, and have interposed no interference. It is said that several of the tribes have made a treaty with the white men, not only to permit them to dig, wherever they please, but to defend them against the attacks of hostile tribes. The Tonto Apaches live just about the placers, and are entirely different from the Apaches infesting the wood from Mesilla Valley to Tucson, whose atrocities drove the Sonora (now Arizona) and Santa Rita mining companies from their operations at Tubac several years since. It is not improbable that as the gold-seekers move eastward they will encounter those inveterate plunderers and assassins, and have to deal them many hard blows before they reform their ways. With the aid of General Carleton they will, however, soon overpower the tribe, bold and numerous as it is.

THE ROUTES TO THE MINES.

To the time of General Clark's visit no one had gone from the East to the mines. Since then many adventurous spirits have flocked thither from this city, and indeed from every portion of the territory and from Colorado. The road is by Albuquerque, Fort Wingate and the Zuni Pass (the Whipple route) to the San Francisco Mountain, and thence southwesterly one hundred miles. The entire distance from here, as estimated by General Clark, is five hundred and sixteen miles. There is no post, nor even a ranch, west of Wingate, which is but ninety miles from the Rio Grande. The road is, however, a very good one, and for the most part well wooded and watered, while the grass is generally abundant. Those interested in studying the peculiarities of the route will find them set forth in Whipple's Report, Volume III. Pacific Railroad Reports, and in Beale's report of his wagon-road expedition. The routes from California are by Los Angeles to Fort Mohave, on the Colorado, three hundred miles, and thence to the mines direct, one hundred and fifty miles, or up the Colorado from the gulf to La Paz and across as before mentioned. A stage line is proposed from Los Angeles to Fort Mohave, and it is understood that the Arizona officers have asked the establishment of a mail route from Albuquerque to Fort Mohave by the Whipple route. This will be upon the thirty-fifth degree parallel, which many have always held to be the best overland route to the Pacific, and the only one entirely practicable for a railroad. It is believed here that if stages were put upon this road they would go crowded from the start. The rush to the mines in the spring will probably surpass anything in the California furor. New Mexico and Colorado will be well-nigh depopulated if one-half of those who now propose to do so.

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When Governor Goodwin and party started from Kansas, it was their intention to go to Tucson by the old road by way of Mexilla; not that they thought of making a permanent capital of that poorly located and unhealthy town, but because, as the chief settlement in the territory, it seemed to be the proper point for locating the government until a better site could be chosen. Now that the people of that place, with barely an exception, have gone to the mines, and the whole population of the territory is gathered about the gold fields, it would be folly to go there, and the officials have determined to go from here directly to the region explored by General Clark. It is in every particular a superior country to that about Tucson, which, aside from being in the far southern part of the territory, is alike oppressively hot, sickly and unproductive. The story of the soldier who died at Fort Yuma, and returned there from Tophet for his blankets, saying that his new abode was chilly when compared with the temperature he had been used to, might have been told of Tucson with equal propriety.

If the capital of the new territory be fixed in the vicinity of the new placers, it will be geographically central, at an elevation insuring a cool and wholesome climate, and in a comparatively good agricultural district. From the Colorado river, navigable at all seasons as far up as Fort Mohave, it will be easily reached from a half dozen points, and from Tucson and the region south to Sonora it will be accessible by way of the Pimos villages. Moreover, starting the territorial government among a population mainly American, and freshly arrived in the country, there will be no old prejudices to overcome, no inimical laws to contend with, and no conflicting interests of long standing to be reconciled. The difficulties encountered in New Mexico will happily be escaped, and should the gold supplies hold out as at present, of which there is no doubt, there is alike a brilliant and useful future for the new territory of which its warmest friends have not dared to dream.

A NEW FORT.

With the entry of the civil functionaries and their assumption of the government of Arizona, Carleton will relinquish his post as military governor, retaining, however, the district as a part of his department. Three companies of California cavalry were started from here on the first of the month to establish a post near the new mines, to be called Fort Whipple, in honor of the gallant lieutenant who surveyed the road now destined to become famous, and the honored general who fell at Chancellorsville. The post is needed not only for a protection to the miners against possible trouble with the Indians, but also to regulate the Sonorians, who have lately reached the mines in large numbers, and have created some disturbance by their attempts to monopolize the placers. Not content with finding treasure where they have no claim, these invaders have undertaken to drive various Americans from the diggings; a game they should have known would not be tolerated for a moment. Fort Whipple will be at once garrisoned with a suitable force, and will probably be the point at which the terri-

torial officers will remain until a capital site is chosen. In connection with the location of Fort Whipple, General Carleton has directed an investigation to be made with a view to finding a road from the mining region to the Colorado in a direct line, to touch the river at a point south of Fort Mohave and north of La Paz. If a practicable road is found it will be the one by which the Californians will reach the mines, and will considerably shorten the distance to the Colorado.

AFFAIRS IN NEW MEXICO.

While New Mexico is temporarily overshadowed by the dazzling rising of Arizona, her prosperity is steadily increasing. This ancient city of the holy faith of St. Francis bears the marks of improvement. Its trade is large and valuable. The amount of goods brought from the states within the present year is enormous. The arrival of Governor Goodwin and party has created an immense sensation. Governor Connolly and other officials went out to meet them and to escort them into the city, and every man, woman and child seemed eager to witness the entry. The Arizonians have been feasted and toasted, and though now here for more than a week, they are the absorbing topic of conversation, while it is the ambition of hundreds to accompany them to their land of gold. They will go forward in a few days, escorted by a company of Missouri cavalry, part of their escort from the states, and a detachment of men from Kit Carson's regiment, commanded by his lieutenant-colonel.

THE NAVAJO WAR.

Referring to Kit Carson, who, by the by, is urged for a brigadiership, and is richly deserving the honor, I am reminded of the Navajo war, with an allusion to which this communication may be closed. It is generally known that the Navajos have for many years been hostile to the United States. When nominally at peace they have been ceaseless in their depredations upon the whites. Not, perhaps, without some degree of provocation, for it is notorious that there is scarcely a well-to-do Mexican family in the country that has not a Navajo slave to do its bidding. It is a badge of aristocracy. These poor creatures have been kidnapped with an audacity that would put a Legree to the blush, and are retained without a shadow of right.

Again, the Navajos are the most enterprising, intelligent and industrious Indians in the land. As a consequence their farms are highly cultivated; they have fine crops and excellent stock, and are indeed rich in this world's goods. They present a temptation which this unscrupulous pale-face, no less than the jealous red man of other tribes, cannot resist, and as they are quick to defend their rights, they are naturally much involved in war. Their present crusade is against all white men, and is waged with great ferocity, though not a few of the tribe have, from hunger and a belief that they would be well used, surrendered themselves to General Carleton.

On Saturday nearly two hundred arrived in this city on their way to the Bosque Redondo, near Fort Sumner, where a reservation has been provided for them. The policy of General Carleton is to induce the tribe to accept a permanent reservation and live upon it under the protection of the government. Several of the minor chiefs who came in with the prisoners think that when the desire of the General is clearly understood by the tribe, it will propose terms of peace. It is therefore not improbable that the war reluctantly waged by the United States, and so profitless to the Navajos, may soon be terminated—a consummation which all good men must devoutly desire. MACK.



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